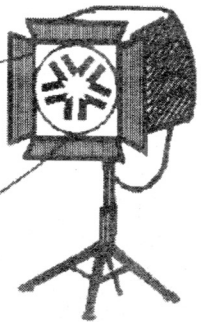


DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA OFFICE ON AGING

Spotlight On Aging



VOLUME XIX, ISSUE 12

A newsletter for D.C. Seniors

December 2004

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



By E. Veronica Pace

In December we celebrate the season with family, friends and colleagues. At this time let's remember the elderly. Take them a plate and sit with them awhile, or just call them up to say hello. You can make a difference in someone's life with a smile, a gentle

touch and a caring spirit.

The winter is coming and we're not always able to predict poor weather conditions. But we can prepare for unforeseen circumstances. Gather non-perishable foods, keep your prescriptions filled in case you are unable to go out for a few days, and keep warm with blankets and layers of clothing.

Always keep your heat on so your pipes won't freeze. The money you save on your heating bill will be less than you think if the plumber has to come out to repair frozen pipes!

I am delighted to congratulate the 2004 District of Columbia Outstanding Older Worker, Ms. Thelma Hauser. She has worked tirelessly for seniors in this city, including veterans. I had the pleasure to work with her when she was a Commissioner on Aging. The selection committee could not have nominated a better candidate. She is definitely an inspiration to our younger generations.

I hope all of you will bring in the holidays with Mayor Anthony A. Williams and the D.C. Office on Aging at the **7th Annual Seniors Holiday Celebration** at the D.C. Armory on December 9 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Our theme this year is "Safe at Home for the Holidays." Come and find out how you and your family can remain safe during the season.

Have a Safe and Happy Holiday!

Veterans Administration Employee is D.C. Outstanding Older Worker



Thelma Hauser
has worked for
the Veterans
Administration
for more than
50 years.

At 78, she still works full time as a social worker with the Veterans Administration, and Thelma Hauser says she still has people to help. Being driven by service, rather than a need of money, has empowered this senior advocate and makes others see why she holds the title of 2004 District of Columbia Outstanding Older Worker.

"Success for the older worker in the work environment has to come from within," says Hauser.

Hauser was recently honored together with representatives from around the nation at the Experience Works Prime Time Awards. The events held during the week gave the winners the opportunity to stay in a hotel, meet with their representatives in Congress, participate in activ-

ities with other national representatives, and be honored at a special awards reception.

Hauser has worked for the Veterans Administration for over 50 years, setting up many programs and models that are still used today, including a dementia caregiver support group.

She has worked with the D.C. Commission on Aging for many years and served as the chairperson, advising the Mayor and Council on issues relating to senior citizens. Hauser is also very involved in her church and her community. As a member of an alumni chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, service is her number one priority.

We salute the 2004 District of Columbia Outstanding Older Worker!

Tap into a dedicated and experienced employment pool today Hire an older worker!

They are reliable, hard working and experienced. Employers interested in hiring a valuable resource may call the Office on Aging Older Workers Employment and Training Program at 202-724-3662.



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

ANTHONY A. WILLIAMS, MAYOR

D.C. OFFICE ON AGING NEWSLETTER

Community Calendar

Announcements

If you live in Wards 2, 5 or 8 and are 55+ years old and have asthma, please call the Greater Washington Urban League to participate in its asthma project for seniors. For further information, call Leanneta Obasanjo at 202-529-8701.

Cab driver alert for the Call N' Ride program in the District of Columbia: If you are a cab driver and want to increase your earnings, please call 202-529-8701 and speak with Judy Hooks.

Holiday Caution: The holidays for most of us are a time for celebration, but for many seniors, it can mean sadness and isolation. If you have a friend or loved one who needs support during this season, or if you notice unexpected changes in a family member, keep IONA Senior Services in mind. Call 202-895-9448 for advice and help.

December Events

8th • 1 p.m.

A holiday presentation of *The Nutcracker* will be presented by Women In Fellowship, at Model Cities Senior Wellness Center, 1901 Evarts St., N.E. This production is not the ballet, but an inspiring, upbeat skit that emphasizes the true meaning of Christmas. For information, call Monica Carroll at 202-635-1900, ext. 11.

9th • 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The 7th Annual Senior Holiday Celebration presented by Mayor Anthony A. Williams and the D.C. Office on Aging will be held at the D.C. Armory, 2001 East Capitol Street, S.E. The event will feature music, lunch, live entertainment, health screenings information, and public safety and support programs. To reserve your ticket, call 202-724-5626.

15th • 11 a.m. to noon

Listen to the melodious voices of the Model Cities Gospel Choir during its holiday concert. This free event will be at 1901 Evarts St., N.E. Call Monica Carroll at 202-635-1900, ext. 11 for details.

16th • 1 to 3 p.m.

IONA's Reminiscence Group will discuss "Gifts

We've Received," followed by a holiday sing-along. The group will meet at IONA, 4125 Albemarle St., N.W. For more information, call 202-895-9448.

20th and 21st • 9:30 a.m.

Get fit for the holidays with the Washington Seniors Wellness Center's "Jingle Jam Workout." It will be held at 3001 Alabama Ave., S.E. Call 202-581-9355 for more information.

21st • 11 a.m.

UPO/Project Keen at the Phillip T. Johnson Senior Center is hosting "Adopt-A-Resident Gift Giving." Senior participants will enjoy singing Christmas carols with and giving gifts to residents of the Center for Aging Health Care Institute. Some of the residents are former senior center participants and others are newly adopted nursing home residents. For details on this event, contact Robinette at 202-584-4431.

28th • 11 a.m.

Washington Seniors Wellness Center is gathering for its Kwanzaa celebration. The center is located at 3001 Alabama Ave., S.E. For further information, call 202-581-9355.

29th • 10:30 a.m.

Join UPO/Project Keen at the Phillip T. Johnson Senior Center as it hosts "Grandparents Are Grand" festivities. Senior participants and their grandchildren get together for fellowship and reflect on the past and the future. The event will be at 3200 S. St., S.E. For details, contact Robinette at 202-584-4431.

January events

7th • 6:30 to 10:30 p.m.

Attend the Red and Black Gala in connection with Model Cities Senior Wellness Center at Gallaudet University, Kellogg Conference Center. For details about cost and to RSVP, call Monica Carroll at 202-635-1900, ext. 11.

18th • 11 a.m. to noon

"Pre-Inauguration Meditation Hour" is being held at UPO/Project Keen at the Phillip T. Johnson Senior Center. Participants will engage in prayer, med-

itation and praise for the incoming government officials. If you are interested in attending, call Robinette at 202-584-4431.

Ongoing events

A new Widowed Persons Outreach Support Group will meet at IONA every Tuesday from January 18 through February 22. The Widowed Persons Outreach, based at Sibley Hospital and co-sponsored by IONA, is forming a bereavement support group for people who have lost a spouse in the last two years. Contact Julie Potter, Coordinator, Widowed Persons Outreach, for more information and to register: 202-364-7602.

Mondays 9:50 a.m. and Wednesdays 1p.m.

Get fit with Vanessa! Vanessa Williams-Harvin, fitness coordinator, will conduct low-impact aerobics and Pilates classes for seniors at the Washington Seniors Wellness Center. The center is at 3001 Alabama Ave., S.E. For more information, call 202-581-9355. A physician's statement is needed for participation.

Mondays and Wednesdays • 1 to 2 p.m.

Computer classes for seniors will be given by the EOFULA Spanish Senior Center. Keep up with technology and learn the basics of the computer. For details, call Alberto at 202-483-5800.

Tuesdays and Wednesdays • 8 a.m.

A walking program will be held at the Washington Wellness Senior Center, 3001 Alabama Ave., S.E. Join and receive free walking pedometers! For details, call 202-581-9355.

Tuesdays and Thursdays • 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Model Cities Senior Wellness Center offers "Lifetime Fitness Program to Prevent Obesity." Learn fitness for life by integrating physical activities, nutrition and health education programs to prevent weight gain and combat obesity. The center is at 901 Evarts St., N.E. For details, call 202-635-1900.

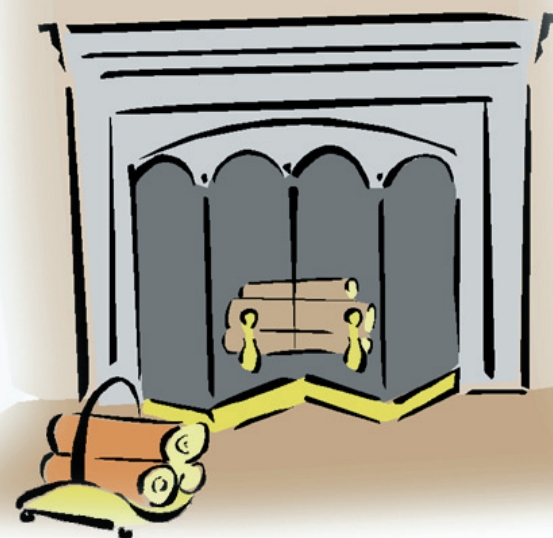
Staying Safe and Warm this Winter

The members of the D.C. Fire and EMS Department want to ensure your safety as you keep warm during the winter months. Since December, January and February are the leading months for residential fires and fire fatalities, here are a few fire safety reminders to help you safeguard your home:

- Make sure that all smoke alarms are in working condition.
- Make sure that all space heaters are placed at least three feet away from combustibles.
- All fireplaces should be equipped with a metal fire screen or heat-tempered glass doors.

- If a family member smokes, he or she should not smoke in bed.
- All matches and lighters should be kept out of the reach of children.
- Electrical cords should not run under rugs, over hooks, or through door openings.
- Make sure that you have a flashlight and eyeglasses near your bed at all times.
- Have and practice your emergency escape plan with your family.

Have a Safe Winter Season!



D.C. OFFICE ON AGING NEWSLETTER

Holiday Depression and Stress

The holiday season is a time full of joy, cheer, parties and family gatherings. However, for many people it is a time of self-evaluation, loneliness, reflection on past failures, and anxiety about an uncertain future.

What Causes Holiday Blues?

Many factors can cause the "holiday blues": stress, fatigue, unrealistic expectations, over-commercialization, financial constraints, and the inability to be with one's family and friends. The demands of shopping, parties, family reunions, and house guests also contribute to feelings of tension.

People who do not become depressed may develop other stress responses, such as headaches, excessive drinking, overeating, and difficulty sleeping. Even more people experience post-holiday let down after January 1. This can result from disappointments during the preceding months compounded with the excess fatigue and stress.

Coping with Stress and Depression During the Holidays

Keep expectations for the holiday season manageable. Try to set realistic goals for yourself. Pace yourself. Organize your time. Make a list and prioritize the important activities. Be realistic

about what you can and cannot do. Do not put all your focus on just one day – remember it is a season of holiday sentiment, and activities can be spread out (time-wise) to lessen stress and increase enjoyment.

Remember the holiday season does not banish reasons for feeling sad or lonely; there is room for these feelings to be present, even if the person chooses not to express them.

Leave "yesteryear" in the past and look toward the future. Life brings changes. Each season is different and can be enjoyed in its own way. Don't set yourself up in comparing today with the "good ol' days."

Do something for someone else. Try volunteering some time to help others.

Enjoy activities that are free, such as driving around to look at holiday decorations; going window shopping without buying; making a snowperson with children.

Be aware that excessive drinking will only increase your feelings of depression.

Try something new. Celebrate the holidays in a new way.

Spend time with supportive and caring people. Reach out and make new friends or contact someone you have not heard from for awhile.

Save time for yourself! Recharge your batteries! Let others share responsibility for activities.

Can Environment Be a Factor?

Recent studies show that some people suffer from seasonal affective disorder (SAD), which results from fewer hours of sunlight as the days grow shorter during the winter months. Phototherapy, a treatment involving a few hours of exposure to intense light, is effective in relieving depressive symptoms in patients with SAD.

Some studies on the benefits of phototherapy found that exposure to early morning sunlight was effective in relieving seasonal depression. Recent findings, however, suggest that patients respond equally well to phototherapy scheduled in the early afternoon. This has practical applications for antidepressant treatment since it allows the use of phototherapy in the workplace as well as the home.

For more information, contact the D.C. Department of Mental Health seven days a week, 24-hours a day at 1-888-7WE-HELP (1-888-793-4357).

Information courtesy of the National Mental Health Association. If you need further help, contact the group's Mental Health Resource Center at 1-800-969-6642.

Be Prepared for Winter Emergencies



Clip out and place on your refrigerator.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

D.C. OFFICE ON AGING (202) 724-5626
The Information and Assistance Office can link you with needed services. Open Monday through Friday, 8:15 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
ENERGY OFFICE HOTLINE (202) 673-6750**
Available Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. for information and assistance with utilities.

**D.C. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
AGENCY (202) 727-6161**
Provides information about shelters, blankets, heaters, oil, and a health clinic nearest you. Open 24-hours, 7-days a week.

**HYPOTHERMIA HOTLINE 1-800-535-7252
(202) 399-7093**
Provides information on emergency transportation, shelters and cold weather information. Open 24-hours, 7-days a week.

**POTOMAC ELECTRIC POWER COMPANY
PEPCO (202) 833-7500**

WASHINGTON GAS (703) 750-1000

Preparing for emergencies during the cold weather season is very important to older persons. As you get older, your body becomes less able to respond to long exposure to the cold.

Seniors should be mindful that hypothermia can be fatal. Hypothermia is a condition of below-normal body temperature – typically 95 degrees Fahrenheit or under.

Hypothermia may occur in anyone who is exposed to severe cold without enough protection. Symptoms include a low temperature, sluggishness, slurred speech, slow breathing and confusion.

To avoid being the victim of hypothermia, dress warmly even when indoors, eat enough food, and stay as active as possible. Because hypothermia may start while you are sleeping, keep warm in bed by wearing enough clothing and using blankets.

Also, neighbors and friends should check on each other and exchange emergency information that includes family members to contact, information about your primary doctor, and other important information.

This winter, think smart and prepare yourself for cold weather, icy conditions, and circumstances where going out might not be possible.

Start storing canned foods and non-perishable items, as well as bottled water and other items to sustain you until you can get out again. Make sure you include a non-electric can opener and items that you can eat without

warming in case of power loss.

Also during the cold season, don't wait to the last minute to refill prescriptions – fill them a week in advance just in case weather and icy conditions make it unsafe to venture out.

During the snow season keep your shovel on a porch or inside so that it is easy to get to and you won't have to go down un-shoveled steps or an un-shoveled walkway to get to the shed or other place where shovels are often stored.

During extreme cold always keep your heat on so that pipes don't freeze up. A good temperature to keep your heat set on is 65 degrees or higher. These protective measures will help you endure the unbearable weather and keep you safe.

In case of a power outage, keep a battery-operated lamp or flashlight in a safe place. Candles can be dangerous, but if you must use them, remember to keep them secure and away from flammable objects. Do not leave burning candles unattended.

Remember to store additional, fresh batteries in case power is not restored right away. Check to see if your neighbors are also experiencing a power outage. If you are the only one, call PEPCO (see number at left).

If a power outage occurs in your area, use a battery-powered radio to stay informed.

In the District of Columbia, the following stations are designated as Emergency Alerting System (EAS) radio stations: WTOP 1500 AM, WMAL 630 AM, WRC 570 AM and WKYS 93.9 FM.

D.C. OFFICE ON AGING NEWSLETTER

Bake Banana Bread for the Holidays

This banana bread recipe makes a sweet and nutritious holiday dessert. The recipe is from Paulette Helman, nutritionist for the D.C. Office on Aging.

Before heating the oven, position one rack in the lower middle section of the oven. Pre-heat oven to 375°F. Grease well a 9-inch by 5-inch loaf pan and set it aside.

Tools required: medium mixing bowl, wire whisk, large wooden spoon, rubber spatula, sifter, liquid and dry measuring cups, measuring spoons, and cooling rack.

Assemble ingredients:

2 large ripe bananas – peeled and mashed well

1/2 cup packed brown sugar

2 extra large eggs, well beaten

1/4 cup light olive oil

1/4 cup buttermilk

1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

2/3 cup chopped walnuts

2 cups whole wheat flour

1 teaspoon baking powder

1/2 teaspoon baking soda

2 teaspoons ground cinnamon

Directions:

In mixing bowl, using an electric mixer, potato masher, pastry cutter or fork, mash bananas well.

Add brown sugar to the mashed bananas and mix well.

Add beaten eggs to the above mixture and continue to mix well.

Add olive oil, buttermilk, pure vanilla extract and walnuts and mix well.

Sift together whole wheat flour, baking powder, baking soda and cinnamon; add the sifted dry ingredients to the banana mixture above and mix only until blended.

Quickly pour entire mixture evenly into the well-greased loaf pan.

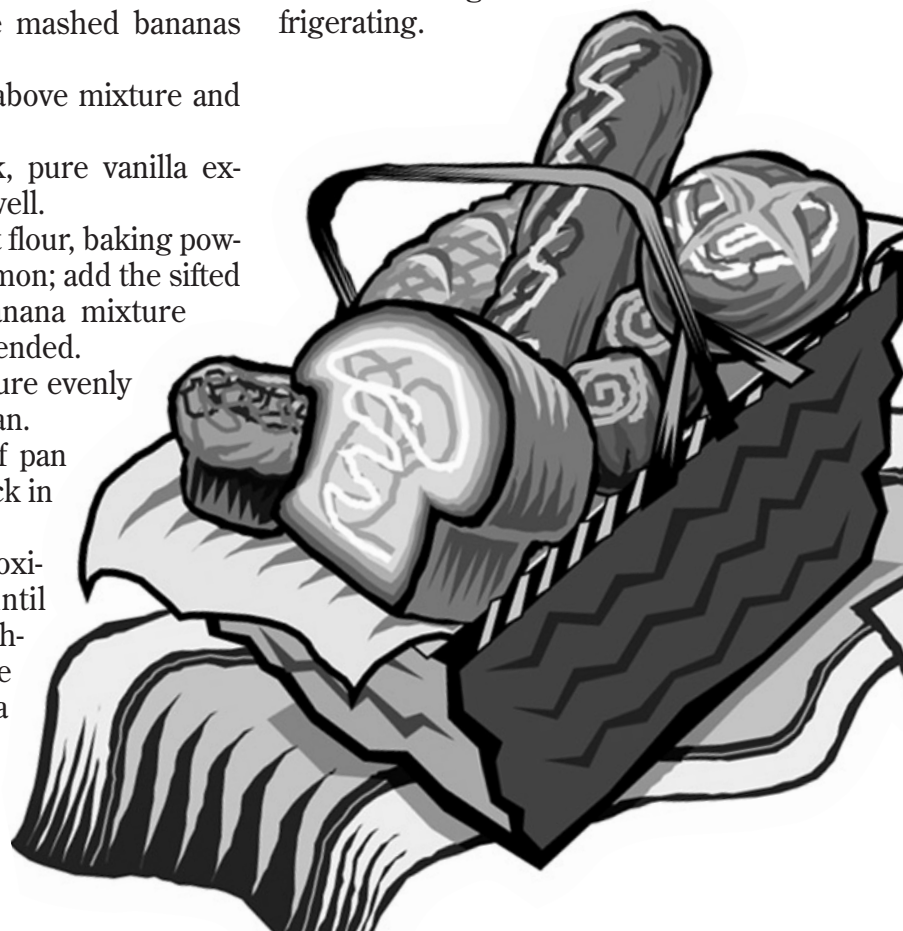
Carefully place filled loaf pan in the center of the oven rack in preheated oven.

Bake at 375°F for approximately 50 minutes or until done (when inserted toothpick comes clean from the middle of the banana bread).

Cool in pan 10 minutes before cooling on rack.

Makes 12 (3/4-inch) slices.

This is delicious served warm or at room temperature after cooling. The cooled bread may be wrapped in plastic wrap or aluminum foil for freezing or refrigerating.



The Thomas Circle Singers Ring in the Holiday Season



The chorus will perform Gerald Finzi's *"In terra pax"* and John Rutter's *"Brother Heinrich's Christmas,"* narrated by Diana Hollander of WGMS 103.5 FM. The program will also include carols and motets of the holiday season by William Mathias, Francis Poulenc, Robert Convery and David Willcocks. The audience can also sing with the spirit of Christmas by joining in traditional carols, including *"Angels We Have Heard on High."*

The concert is "guaranteed to put you in the holiday spirit and helps support a good cause," says TCS Artistic Director James Kreger. All proceeds from the concert will go to Emmaus Services for the Aging, an organization that provides services to the poor elderly.

The concert will be held at 4 p.m. on Sunday, December 12, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 4900 Connecticut Ave., N.W. Tickets

are \$20 general admission and \$15 for seniors and students.

To order tickets, contact the Thomas Circle Singers at 1226 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20005, call (202) 232-3353, e-mail: info@thomascirclesingers.org, or visit the Web site www.thomascirclesingers.org to order tickets online.

SPOTLIGHT ON AGING

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441 4th St., N.W., 9th Floor, Washington, D.C. 20001
202-724-5622 • www.dcoa.dc.gov

E. Veronica Pace, **Executive Director**
Darlene Nowlin, **Editor**
Adrian Reed, **Photographer**

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Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination which is prohibited by the Act. In addition, harassment based on any of the above protected categories is prohibited by the Act. Discrimination in violation of the Act will not be tolerated. Violators will be subjected to disciplinary action.

The Office on Aging is in partnership with the District of Columbia Recycling Program.

There's no better way to experience the holiday season than through music. This Christmas season, join the **Thomas Circle Singers (TCS)** as they give new meaning to "a choir of mixed voices" by raising their voices with orchestra and the voices of all who attend to celebrate "A TCS Christmas" on Sunday, Dec. 12.